

## Current Economic Programs Printed Survey Results: by the *Education Finance Survey Statistics Users* Respondent Base

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U.S. Census Bureau  
Current Economic Statistics User Survey

OMB CQM-26 (Rev.5/5/98)

### I. DATA CONTENT

Your answers identifying the survey data you use will help us understand our users' patterns of data use.

1. Which Current Economic Statistics from the Census Bureau do you use? (Mark all that apply.)

#### (1) Monthly

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0.0%;	0	None
67.6%;	23	Retail Sales
64.7%;	22	Wholesale Trade
70.6%;	24	Manufacturing/Trade Inventory/Sales
73.5%;	25	Housing Starts
73.5%;	25	Building Permits
70.6%;	24	New Home Sales
61.8%;	21	Value of New Construction Put in Place
50.0%;	17	Housing Completions
41.2%;	14	Expenditures for Residential Improvements
50.0%;	17	New Residential Construction
38.2%;	13	New Mobile Home Placements
52.9%;	18	Monthly Imports and Exports
73.5%;	25	Current Industrial Reports
61.8%;	21	Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, Orders

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Replies 34; Forms 38

#### (2) Quarterly

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57.1%;	16	Quarterly Financial Report
85.7%;	24	Current Industrial Reports
17.9%;	5	Federal Assistance Awards Data System
46.4%;	13	Quarterly Tax Survey
25.0%;	7	Quarterly Public Employee Retirement

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#### (3) Annual

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71.1%;	27	Annual Retail Trade
71.1%;	27	Annual (Wholesale) Trade
55.3%;	21	Annual Survey of Communications
65.8%;	25	Transportation Annual Survey
63.2%;	24	Service Annual Survey
89.5%;	34	County Business Patterns

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71.1%;	27	ZIP Code Business Patterns
78.9%;	30	Statistics of U.S. Businesses
47.4%;	18	Characteristics of New Housing
65.8%;	25	Annual Building Permits
47.4%;	18	New Residential Construction in Selected Metropolitan Areas
55.3%;	21	Annual Capital Expenditures
84.2%;	32	Annual Survey of Manufactures
71.1%;	27	Current Industrial Reports
52.6%;	20	Research and Development Survey
52.6%;	20	Plant Capacity Utilization
100.0%;	38	Education Finance Survey
60.5%;	23	State Tax Collection Survey
34.2%;	13	Annual Public Employee Retirement
60.5%;	23	Annual Survey of Public Employment
50.0%;	19	Consolidated Federal Funds Report
76.3%;	29	State Government Finances
71.1%;	27	Annual Imports and Exports

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Replies 38; Forms 38

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## II. DATA DELIVERY

The Census Bureau is considering use of the Internet as the primary method of data delivery. By completing the following questions, you will help us retain the most essential delivery formats and design the best possible data delivery service.

(4) 2. How do you receive current economic data now? (Mark all that apply.)

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92.1%;	35	Printed Publications	18.4%;	7	Direct (E-mail) delivery
81.6%;	31	World Wide Web (Internet)	18.4%;	7	FAX
47.4%;	18	CD-ROMs	5.3%;	2	Regular mail
31.6%;	12	Diskettes	7.9%;	3	Other

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Replies 38; Forms 38

- Check values by telephone
- also use microfiche in some cases.
- Internet, ProNet
- CD Rom & Publications in Library

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(5) 3. What format do you PREFER when downloading data for further manipulation? (Mark all that apply.)

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56.8%;	21	Spreadsheet (e.g., wkl, xls, etc...)
40.5%;	15	Database (e.g., dbf, mdb, etc...)
35.1%;	13	ASCII delimited
32.4%;	12	ASCII flat files
27.0%;	10	Retrieve from print or screen and enter manually
13.5%;	5	Do not manipulate data
10.8%;	4	Other

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Replies 37; Forms 38

- Sas data sets
- download from [www.Census.gov](http://www.Census.gov)
- So we can manipulate.

4. What capabilities do you want on the Census Internet site? (For each line, indicate the degree of your preferences, from 5 [high] to 1 [low].)

(6) a. Direct (E-mail) delivery:

48.3%;	14	5	10.3%;	3	3	13.8%;	4	1
13.8%;	4	4	10.3%;	3	2	3.4%;	1	Don't know

Replies 29; Forms 38

(7) b. E-mail notification:

48.1%;	13	5	14.8%;	4	3	11.1%;	3	1
7.4%;	2	4	14.8%;	4	2	3.7%;	1	Don't know

Replies 27; Forms 38

(8) c. Retrieve/display to screen:

75.0%;	24	5	9.4%;	3	3	0.0%;	0	1
12.5%;	4	4	0.0%;	0	2	3.1%;	1	Don't know

Replies 32; Forms 38

(9) d. Search:

79.4%;	27	5	2.9%;	1	3	0.0%;	0	1
17.6%;	6	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 34; Forms 38

(10) e. Download complete data sets:

78.1%;	25	5	6.2%;	2	3	0.0%;	0	1
12.5%;	4	4	3.1%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 32; Forms 38

(11) f. Download selected data:

84.4%;	27	5	3.1%;	1	3	0.0%;	0	1
12.5%;	4	4	0.0%;	0	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 32; Forms 38

(12) g. Software help/tutorials:

42.9%;	12	5	25.0%;	7	3	0.0%;	0	1
25.0%;	7	4	7.1%;	2	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

Replies 28; Forms 38

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(13) h. Publication-quality printing:

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46.4%;	13	5	21.4%;	6	3	0.0%;	0	1
25.0%;	7	4	7.1%;	2	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

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Replies 28; Forms 38

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(14) i. Charts and graphs:

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48.4%;	15	5	19.4%;	6	3	0.0%;	0	1
22.6%;	7	4	9.7%;	3	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

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Replies 31; Forms 38

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(15) j. Geographic maps:

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54.8%;	17	5	6.5%;	2	3	0.0%;	0	1
29.0%;	9	4	6.5%;	2	2	3.2%;	1	Don't know

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Replies 31; Forms 38

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(16) k. Other, please specify:

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100.0%;	2	electronic bulletin board	0.0%;	0	Other
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Replies 2; Forms 38

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• [none]

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(17) l. Electronic Bulletin Board (To collect write-ins)

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0.0%;	0	5	0.0%;	0	3	0.0%;	0	1
0.0%;	0	4	100.0%;	1	2	0.0%;	0	Don't know

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Replies 1; Forms 38

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### III. DATA USAGE

Your answers describing how you use the data will help us design the most effective Current Economic Statistics retrieval tool.

(18) 5. Do you combine/compare/merge data from more than one source listed in Question 1?

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25.7%;	9	No	74.3%;	26	Yes
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Replies 35; Forms 38

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(19) 6. What time periods do you consider when using these data? (Mark X all that apply.)

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80.6%;	29	5+ years	52.8%;	19	trends up to 1 year
66.7%;	24	trends up to 5 years	0.0%;	0	Other
61.1%;	22	latest 1 or 2 periods			

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Replies 36; Forms 38

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(20) 7. How do you use the data? (Mark all that apply.)

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55.6%;	20	Perform patron/client inquiries
44.4%;	16	Create value-added products/services
30.6%;	11	Republish in newspaper/journal
19.4%;	7	Inform investment decisions
16.7%;	6	Inform marketing decisions
13.9%;	5	Store reports/printouts for archival purposes
11.1%;	4	Locate new sites
2.8%;	1	Other

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Replies 36; Forms 38

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- [none]
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(21) 8. What explanatory information do you consult when using these data? (Mark all that apply.)

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86.1%;	31	Definition of terms
86.1%;	31	Narrative text describing survey results
75.0%;	27	Sampling and estimation methodology
58.3%;	21	Survey design
5.6%;	2	Other

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Replies 36; Forms 38

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- research
  - Comparisons to earlier surveys and/or similar data from other agencies--e.g. census to BEA in one estimates.
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(22) 9. Do you have any pressing data or information needs that are not currently being met?

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- Retail sales for Central Business Districts; zip code retail sales, manufacturers, wholesale, etc; zip code housing data including rent and home prices; SIC business from zip codes.
  - Selected salaries for selected industries & occupations.
  - MCD Business Patterns, Massachusetts is doing away with county government, MCD income estimates.
  - The availability of Residential and Commercial Building Permit Data.
  - Number of Mobile Homes & Value of, by state, on a monthly basis. (Currently only published annually) -- Also, by county, if possible.
  - Non-residential building permits data and value of new non-residential construction part in place.
  - YES! Bring back non-residential state/local permits authorized! This was a severe loss for interpreting local economic trends. Also, more geographic detail, more frequently.
  - Household Expenditure Data at State Level.
  - Need more detailed annual data for 6 digit SIC codes
  - Place and regional economic data sets in relation to population/race trends.
  - We always require information broken out by minority group status, even if they are forecast.
  - Crime--not all areas of the U.S. participate in their state uniform crime reports program, so it becomes difficult to make informed decisions.
  - Non-residential construction data outside California! Bring it back!
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#### IV. INDUSTRY CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

We will soon begin restructuring the Current Economic Surveys based on the new North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Your answers will help us ensure that these surveys continue to provide the economic information needed by markets, policy makers, and business people. For more information on NAICS, see the Bureau's web site: <http://www.census.gov/NAICS>.

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(24) 10. At what levels of detail do you MOST FREQUENTLY USE industry data classified by Standard Industrial Classification (SIC)? (Mark all that apply.)

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70.6%;	24	4-digit industries (or maximum detail I can get)
58.8%;	20	2-digit major groups
55.9%;	19	Sector totals (SIC division); e.g., Manufacturing or Retail Trade
50.0%;	17	3-digit industry groups
2.9%;	1	NA (don't use SIC-based data)
0.0%;	0	Other

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Replies 34; Forms 38

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• [none]

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(25) 11. Were you aware that the SIC system is being replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)?

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20.6%;	7	I was unaware of this
41.2%;	14	I am partially aware, but lack details
38.2%;	13	I am aware and understand some implications

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Replies 34; Forms 38

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12. Would you like to receive more information about NAICS?

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(26) Yes, please send me - (Mark all that apply)

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91.3%;	21	A brochure that explains NAICS	30.4%;	7	Conference announcements
78.3%;	18	NAICS implementation plans	0.0%;	0	Other

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Replies 23; Forms 38

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• [none]

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(27) No Thanks -

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72.7%;	8	I will check the Census Bureau's web site ( <a href="http://www.census.gov/naics">www.census.gov/naics</a> )
27.3%;	3	I don't need more information about NAICS

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Replies 11; Forms 38

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## V. USER PROFILE

Please tell us about yourself so we may serve you better.

(28) 13. Type of organization.

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33.3%;	12	Government	2.8%;	1	Individual
27.8%;	10	Academic/Research	2.8%;	1	Library
22.2%;	8	Business	2.8%;	1	Other
8.3%;	3	Media			

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Replies 36; Forms 38

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• Library (University

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(29) 14. Do you work in your organization's library?

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45.9%;	17	Yes	54.1%;	20	No
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Replies 37; Forms 38

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(30) 15. What is your affiliation with the Census Bureau?

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45.9%;	17	None	2.7%;	1	Census Information Center
21.6%;	8	State Data Center	24.3%;	9	Other
5.4%;	2	Business/Industry Data Center			

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Replies 37; Forms 38

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- Philadelphia Regional Office
  - Richmond Public Library, BST Dept. 101 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219
  - Cooperator in disseminating permits authorized data
  - Formerly on Advisory Board
  - Government
  - Depository
  - Affiliate Data Center
  - Congress
  - GPO Depository
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(35) 20. May we contact you to follow up on this questionnaire?

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84.4%;	27	Yes	15.6%;	5	No
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Replies 32; Forms 38

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(36) Question 21. Remarks:

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- A published paper version should always be made available for purchase to the public. Information being available on the internet is nice, yet it is a completely different animal than having a hard copy version of the information. An example: I can receive my new off the internet, but I still prefer to get my newspaper in the morning for reading at my leisure away from a computer.
  - Census bureau data is always helpful--the data you provide enhances our publication and enables readers to make informal business decisions.
  - We serve a varied clientele (academic, business, government, and private citizens) and work across many subject. Census data are absolutely vital to us. Our biggest need is for more geographic area detail more frequently (state, county, place, if possible). Users often do not understand the 5 yr. gaps and lag time for the major Economic Surveys that offer such detail, much less the 10 yr. decennial cycle. The internet is a great help in speeding "publication", but we find access is not yet universal. We still download and print entire documents for guide reference and historical purposes. I am concerned about just how long the electronic medi will remain accurate and usable as technology changes. How will the Bureau deal with these problems?
  - Respondent provided voluminous, illegible comments throughout that could not be deciphered to record.
  - We look forward to working with you on the upcoming Census.
  - The Web site is great, but it is sometimes difficult to quickly find the information I'm seeking. Also, I am mystified by your downloading parameters. Things should be in dbf format, which is more universally accessible to database managers than mdb.
  - Census is always quick and dependable. Great job!
  - We are in the site selection/economic development function. Census data is absolutely crucial to our function, especially the ability to compare areas.
  - We love the Census Bureau! Clear publications indices and ease of search engines on the Internet

- site are very important to us. Also, choice of how to download data is good, not all users need or can use spreadsheet software.

Figure 1: